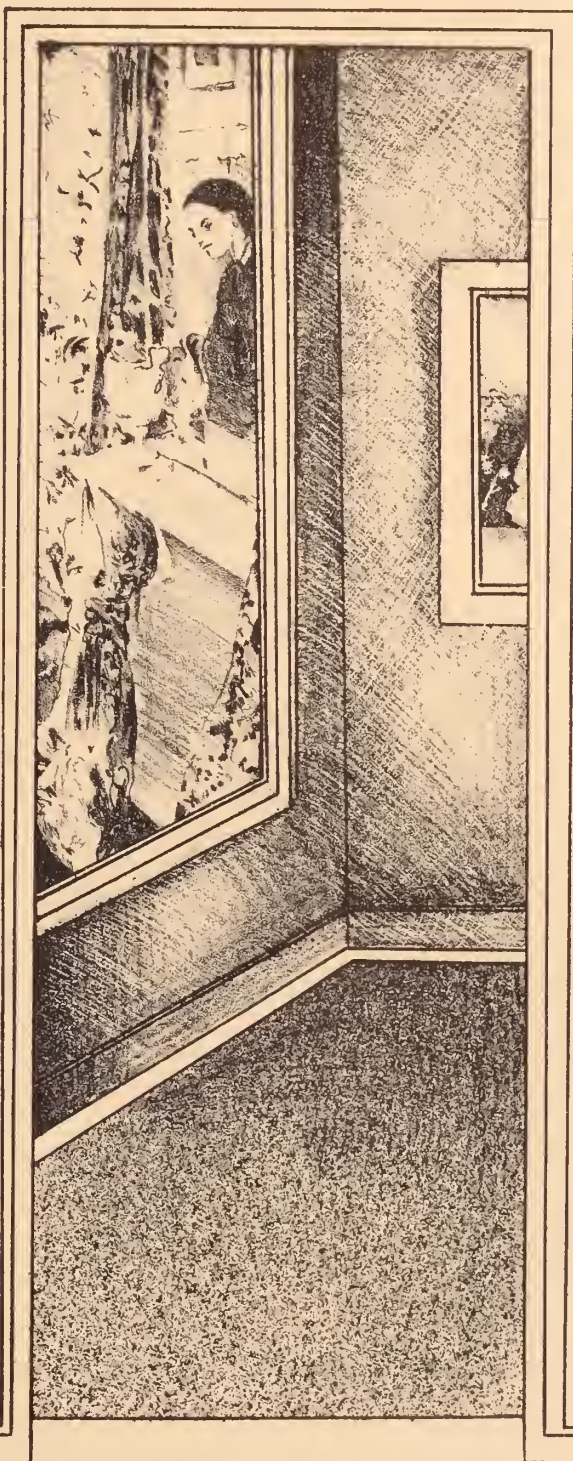




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BARNARD

CALVERT

CALVERT FALL 1974

The cover is a lithograph by Scip Barnhardt titled "Somewhere Among Evil Women."

Poetry:

- | | | |
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| | | Stillborn |
| 4 | Barbara Dunn | I Do Not Fear Crew Cut Men |
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Fiction:

- 12 Ronald DeCicco
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The Models

from *An Evening at Home or Yer Rite Paw*
from *Raisin Song*
(Untitled)

Art:

- 1 Debbie Kmetz
- 7 Julie Finver
- 8 Denise Tillie
- 11 Jim Thorpe
- 26 Joan Stolz
- 47 Nancy Ing
- 50 C. Cook
- 60 Mitch Braunbart

Charlotte's Woodpile

"Brando" from the Desiree series

Transformation

Freedom no. 29

Virgin Statue

Photography:

- 19 Stanford Barouh
- 21 Arnold Kramer
- 37 Mike Welsh
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"Blue" Walker--Lightweight

Adèle Slaughter

Editor-in-Chief

Joe Brennan

Poetry Editor

Julia Douglass

Fiction Editor

Grace Finkle

Managing Editor

Francis Taylor

Associate Editor

Judith Harris

Art Editor

Bill Griffiths

Bill Lloyd

Joe Lerner

Staff



Every Saturday
he roams the hills,
hulking
leg of dog,
spine of rusted badger
skull of deer and bear
turtle bones
into a gleaming white
trash can liner.

At home, in the basement
a dryer with one eye
waits
roaring and empty.

At night, on cement
knees
he feeds the seared
air with bone.

He knows that next
Saturday
there will be nothing
there
but it is his word
against a dryer
and there is the eye
to contend with.

David Hickman

STILLBORN

Even so, one might say
the nails: the exactness
of the promise; the
eyelids now always
still continuous membrane
unseparate from the rest, thin
skin like raw clam;
the unformed palate,
the clear paste of it,
but most of all
the fetal hands
in the first place
pressed over his ears
say don't
I don't want to hear it.

Desirée Weidaw

SWEETGRASS TEA

What my Daddy passed down to me
is sweetgrass set in water, if the water
is hot. And its light like the sunlight
we steep it in. Honey,
he said, this here is good if you make it
right. Sweetgrass
will break a fever in your sleep and the moonlight
will flow right in. It will remember
all good times for morning.
Be sure you always have some nearby
to pick fresh; don't let it get old
before you steep it; don't steep it too long.
Take the time for yourself when its ready;
wash it slow across your tongue, slow,
like it has something to think about.

Desirée Weidaw

I DO NOT FEAR CREW CUT MEN

I do not fear crew cut men
They were all my father's friends
with pinewood dens deep in basements
where their honey cocker-spaniels
would bury their wet black noses
in my crotch as I sat waiting, small and propped
in the good easy chair, my feet
on the Morroccan camel saddle that they ordered
from the PX in Weisbaden with the leaden
crystal just before they came back home
to the sweet insides of the girls they married.

I do not fear crew cut men
They were all my father's friends
who lived in perpetual autumn
as low lights formed half-moons
on the knots of pine and caught the soft
dull surface of the guns
and I sat playing with clicking poker chips ,
blue, white, and red
breathing in the haze of Old Spice
that filled the room.

They sat in shirts of naked ladies and red
hibiscus
Each short gray hair playing with light
and passing it to another
Each incised line on their brown necks
snaked into another
Sipping highballs out of glasses with
golden rims
lightly fingering the lacquered surface of wood
that was to become their new boats.

I do not fear crew cut men
They were all my father's friends
in the photographs in the bottom of the tin
bread box that my mother keeps
out on sunny islands being fanned by black
Samoan girls
hats cocked and wings gleaming
smiling brightly through terror at their backs
and the dark bloody night rides in low-bellied
sea planes.

Barbara Dunn

LOVE A WET BABY

You got lit, got hit
like a slug with hot salt.
Lot's wife in heat
watered down to silt,
you were. You were meat
marinated to the hilt
swallowing proof mixed met-
aphors like a dry hold
in a split ship. Wet
with saltwater you were, weed.

To sit fiddling while
phosphorous burned your bones
to fisheye-pearl (whale
of an ivory eightball, beans
to me) was my part; sail
calm through your stormscenes
like cruel Prospero, soul
kept in a fingerbone, sins
seated in my chest, the hole
of Davy Jones' hell.

Outside in the car I wrung
you out sponge, veins popped
with relief and a delicate ringing
like cracking china piped
through my bones: the feeling
spread to my neck, swiped
my backbone, finally filling
the car; your sweat wave swept
me under, baby you know I love
to float on. . . what I live in.

William Lloyd

THE TREE
(for Linda Pastan)

'I caught me a girl and before she could leave,
I said, Let's go play Adam and Eve.'
-Bob Dylan-

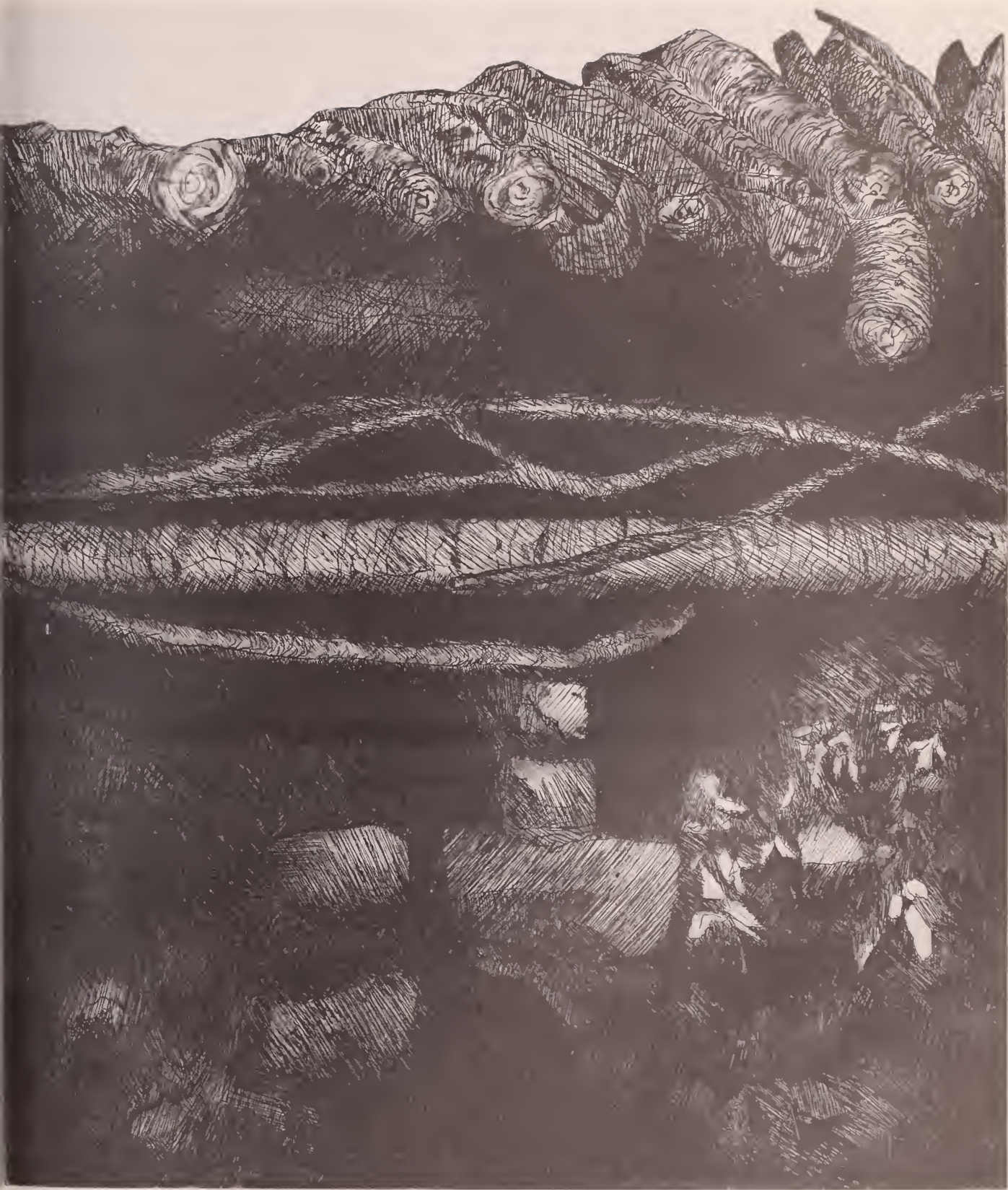
It was an order: name them.
first we sought the single tree,
approached it cautiously
and took its measure.
She said: How can these branches
be bent back to seedsize,
smothered into a name?
We watched it twist away from us in the wind.

The rivers and animals went easily.
The other trees too: cringing dogwood,
and flowers: shrinking violet.

But we did, we broke it, surrounded it, bound it,
we knew it.
And then we ate its fruit. . .

William Lloyd





from *Pillow Book*

soul, essential, if in the hollow air it is left
between men,

the necklace, the polished stones unfasten
and separate

the bracelet
from the wrist, polished
separates

from the ear, the axel loosens
an old penetration

the rings, the shape of the fingers;
the third doorway with light
and within the others
the closest fanned
away from the second in tight
parallel with the light of the third;
black seam broken by a hinge,
the door seals shadow
on the wall in the wide
the corner of the Picasso
the mobile
the listless silver forms

Hahn
on hearing the news
of Hiroshima
retired to his room
what country would have the resource
and what resource beyond
finance and research
Threnody, the strings thick and threatening

the body puffed out
the several legs
radiating to the floor,

cocked and stamping like a pianist's fingers
shake pared to a shudder
staccato to vibrato
danced a convulsive tango
antennae flashing the air
wings surrendering the abdomen
spirit hoisted over the legs
wings out
surrendered four beats of his front leg
counting
one.two..three...four....
shivered, the wet lacquer of pesticide

the urn below
the earth; the ash
that was the soul's acoustic
his glass seeps
a bracelet of water
"boundaries--where the hearts accumulate."
his finger removes
the thin figure
"though man's fate goes unattended by the gods
his loves are nourished,"
survive; the snow line
bitter cold, the sun brass
moon's hammock
a man who despite shackles goes
jungle; litigation
amidst high grass goes
cocking his legs

Carlo Parcelli



personalities, military personnel and opera singers who had made their way in the world. On a local level, they wrote about the newsworthy supermarket magnates, lawyers, judges, musicians, nightclub and restaurant owners. A good deal of feature material dwelled on "characters": the nice lady who every year baked a birthday cake for the President of the United States; the internationally-known stripper who devoted her spare time to charitable causes; the perennial barfly who owned a regional reputation for picking the winners. Regardless of the story, the *prominente* returned to their homes, successful but unspoiled. Written in this vein, the pieces were approving, flattering and biased in favor of the Italian community. If the other groups would do likewise, they seemed to say.

Certain traits drew continued verbal applause: their strong family ties, their kindness toward others, their comicality in face of adversity, their respect for the Church, their communal unity. It was the last trait that served as a theme for many of the pieces, which in turn bestowed upon the Italian community the status of a model. The Italians, they intimated, showed what could be done when people worked together, and the writers used such phrases as "common cause," "positive attitude" and "solid homelife." Granted, the immigrants' children might move away to the suburbs. But they always returned to the home. The home was the place of companionship and comfort, where quarrels were settled, crises rationalized, problems solved, futures planned, love shared. Structurally the homes were no better than the other city dwellings, but the writers saw the homes as better kept, and took special note of the neighborhood's good housekeeping.

In the corner house in his neighborhood, thirteen-year-old John Bertelli made his way up the porch steps. Inside, he went to his mother, busy in the kitchen, and kissed her.

"Hi, Mama."

"Hello, Boy."

Their afternoon exchange. He mounted the stairs to his bedroom. He walked faster now.

The room, quite obviously, reflected the boy's spirit. Suspended from a light fixture, a P-40N Warhawk readied itself to destroy an enemy aircraft; at the head of the bed, an F-100 took off on yet another dangerous mission; on the bureau, a Piper Cherokee and a Cessna 180 occupied a runway. A Spitfire maintained an ominous position on a closet ledge. In a corner of the room, a generation of early aircraft took shelter in a hangar, a four-tiered bookshelf designed by the boy in shop class. A work in progress--a Tiger Shark--sat unassembled on his desk, where he worked. Rather than move the parts of an aircraft, he did his homework on the bed. This way he had a continuity to his operation that otherwise would have been hampered by logistics. The cement, paints, brushes, decals, parts and razor blades each had its proper place. Collectively, they gave the impression of order, but the memories of the past were scattered throughout the room: Orville and Wilbur, Lindy, Miss Earhart, all the dead men and women moved by the prospect of flight.

In this room John Bertelli came to life. His latest

About once a year they found themselves the topic of a house editorial, a column, a short feature article, or a spread in the Sunday supplement.

The authors gave their unrestrained praise to the neighborhood and its residents, mentioning in passing or not at all the *padrone* system the early immigrants knew. Civic interest took precedence over scholarly intent in much of the work. Consequently, these writers also glossed over the gangland stories, preferring to leave them to TV, movies and paperback books. When a syndicated story on organized crime did appear, its effects proved negligible. The neighborhood [and the nation] now knew wrongdoing could exist anywhere, among any people.

The overwhelming majority of writers concentrated their efforts on the successful vineyard owners, labor leaders, political figures, business executives, sports

creation, the Cessna 180, was badly damaged. Not beyond repair, but badly damaged nevertheless. The landing strut. His eye caught it as he opened the door, before he went through the routine of dropping his books on the bed, tossing off his shoes, unbuttoning his shirt and himself falling on the bed. As he opened the door he saw it. Today it was a landing strut; the day before yesterday it had been a left stabilizer; some time last week it had been a fuel tank.

It happened so often that the boy suspected his mother of having a prejudice against airplanes. [*Prejudice* was one of three words he missed on his last spelling test.] Everyone knew that his mother, known in the neighborhood as Anna, had a prejudice against airplanes. To his inquiries, she had a standard reply: "It happened because they were dusty. If you canno' take-uh-the-time to clean them, Giovanni, you should getta rid of them. *All* of them." He could not tell his mother [who still had trouble speaking the language] about the airplanes. She wanted to hear nothing about them.

After inspecting the calamity, he went into the hall and called downstairs: "Mama, did you see what you did to my plane?"

No answer.

He went downstairs. He took the exhibit with him.

"Mama. Did you see what you did to my plane?"

"Yes, I saw. If you canno' keep them clean, Giovanni, you should getta rid of them. Junk, that's all they are. They collect dust, that's all. *Toys*. You are too bigga boy for toys."

"For Cripesake."

"Giovanni, what did you say? What did you say to your mother?"

"Nothing. I didn't say anything."

"Yes you did. You canno' fool me. I heard you say bad words."

"I did not."

"Yes you did and I am going to tell your father about."

"I don't care."

"You will when you canno' go outside."

"I don't want to go outside."

"Then go away from my kitchen. Go away and cleanna you' dur-tee mouth."

Back in his room he began the maintenance work on the damaged Cessna. With a razor blade he carved some old glue from the aircraft. He made compact strokes with the blade, the chips falling neatly onto last night's newspaper. But now he lost control of himself, nearly cutting into his thumb: "*Giovanni, I wanna you to go to the store.*" Her voice, shattering his reverie, startled him. Involuntarily, he sometimes acted his age.

He was slow in moving but economical in his movements. Knowing precisely what to do, he was not long in coming to the kitchen. "What *for*?" he said, pained.

She handed him money. "A can of ricotta for the lasagne. Your father, he likes. Go on, Giovanni, *move*."

"All right already. I'm going, I'm going."

"You better, Boy. One of these days I give a-you a good hard slap, Giovanni. To teach a-you some respect for your mama. A good hard slap acrossa the face for the way you

talka to me. Go, I said." Standing before him, she issued both an order and a challenge.

Warily, he made a start for the door. As he passed, she slapped him hard on the forearms [he winced], shoulders [his hands covered his head] and back [he lunged forward]. Then she hit him once more on the back to make him move faster and to teach him respect. But he was thirteen, and he could withstand her physical punishment. She hurt only her hand.

He was an enigma to Anna, who knew the word because it was the same in both languages. *Enigma, enigmatico; peculiare*. He was a handsome boy, tall, but not as strong as Anna would wish. Scrawny rather than strong, without the redeeming trait of speed. No, he could not run fast. Nothing like his father at one time, and not much like his brothers. Giovanni, compared to his brothers, seemed *strano*, a frightening trait for a mother to discern in her son. Her other sons, Rodolpho and Felice, had not come out this way. Anna gave birth to them two years apart and waited twelve years more to bring Giovanni into the world. Giovanni was the baby, Anna always told visitors. Her husband, Giuseppe, denied his wish for a big family, had wanted another boy. Not another *child*, another *boy*. By the grace of God [and medicine, she would have to admit] she had three sons, and she loved them all. But Rudy, her firstborn, Rudy was everything. Rudy was the playboy, and Rudy was Anna's joy. He inherited his father's sturdy build, and he behaved the way Anna supposed Italian boys should behave: he had nice manners, he played his sports, he took out the girls. She was proud of him, and quietly proud of his sexual skill. Too bad for his young American wife who did not understand his needs and did not know how to satisfy them. *She* never had that trouble with her Giuseppe.

Felice, the second boy, and Giovanni resembled each other in their need for quiet. Together they talked long and often. She did not understand what they said. Felice also loved the planes, but as a child he had not led a sheltered life. Rudy had led the way for Felice, showing him by example how to start the car, how to dress, how to talk to the young girls. Felice stayed behind while Rudy led the way for him. Felice did not have Rudy's skill with the women, but he had married. He was a nice, decent boy who quietly allowed Rudy to lead the way for him. She could say nothing against Felice. Giovanni was her problem. They all talked about her age and body when the time came for Giovanni. Had something happened to her to make him the way he was? He stayed off by himself too much. Rudy had led the way for Felice, the quiet one, but Giovanni grew up alone. It was no good, being alone so much of the time.

Thinking had used up some of her energy, but Anna had an abundance of it. She was a tidy housekeeper by habit; her hands could not keep still. To have something to do, she went upstairs to his room, to tighten the bed and to put his schoolbooks on the bureau. She knew where he always left them. She removed two books and a looseleaf from the bed, but in her haste--she always worked quickly--she dropped one of the books on the floor. A piece of paper, a placeholder, fell from it. Her instincts told her to open the folded piece of paper, and

Anna acted on instinct. Her lips moved as she read.

Dear Felix,

I am doing well in school although not as well as I should. I could do better. I don't think some of the teachers like me very much. Some of them I don't like very much. One of them always seems to know when I don't know the answer and that's when he calls on me. When I know the answer and I have my hand up, he calls on someone else. I think he's a mindreader. I don't really believe that, but I'm beginning to.

The other teachers are OK but nothing special. They don't seem very friendly sometimes. They says things and the kids laugh at them, but they aren't funny. I won't laugh at somebody's jokes just because he's a teacher. I wish you could hear some of the stuff they say. The other day one of them said that some of us didn't belong in the accelerated section. He meant me. That made me feel really great.

My models are OK, except when Mama dusts them. She calls them toys. That's how she thinks. She doesn't like them. What does she like? I

Anna folded the letter and placed it randomly in the book. She did not stop to consider it a bookmark; her mind ignored such a trivial possibility. Wanting to keep busy, she decided to return to the kitchen, where her work awaited her. But first she went to her bedroom and sat on the bed and cupped her head in her hands. While she was there, the boy opened and slammed the front door, marched to the kitchen where he placed a can of ricotta and some change on the table in one motion, a drop, and hurdled the stairs two at a time to his room. Through thin walls his mother could hear him working. She tried to listen, hoping she could understand.

She made herself busy in the kitchen until the double knock, the pause, and the front door's swift opening signalled the arrival of her husband. Bowing, he removed his hat to salute her, but she did not return a curtsy, her part of the evening's animated ritual. She frowned.

"Hey, my Anna. Whatsamatter with you?"

"Whatsamatter with *me*? *Him*." She thumbed several times in the direction of the boy's room. She pointed her index finger to her head and made a circular motion with her hand. "Giovanni. He doesn't *do* anything. Justa sits. Justa sits in his room and builds da airplanes. Justa like the other one. I supposa he wants to *fly* them too." She hunched her shoulders and worked steadily around the sink and stove, pausing only to brush back a persistent thatch of salt-and-pepper hair from her forehead.

"Ah, now, Anna. Leave him alone. The other one liked the airplanes too. I supposa somet'ing in our blood cause-a dis t'ing." His hands pressed firmly against her back, her shoulders.

She shrugged him off. "Leamy alone, leamy alone."

"Anna, you tell me whatsa wrong. I wanna know."

"That one. He'sa going to be plenty trouble. *Yes*. Giovanni. I was dere in his room today."

"Snooping, no doubt. You no oughta do that, Anna. He'sa thirteen-years-old boy now."

"Oh, *shuddup*, Giuseppe. What do you know about? Yes I was in his room today, and I founda some kinda letter. I canno' understand him."

"Ah-*ha*. To some nice young girl. Thatsa got my Anna mad." His voice, his face were still hopeful.

"Him? Giovanni? I wish it was so." She shook her head. Her anger gone, her energy exhausted, now came her tears. She raised her apron to remove them from her eyes, but she could not remove her shame. That would be with her always. "It was to him. To poor Felice. Four months in heaven."

Ronald DeCicco

LAP OF APPLES

Morris
my moe
my more than apples grandfather,

you overview us
through glass tumblers
recalling our fat cheeked childhood.

my moe

you rock in the straight-
back chair to us who sprang
from you like the legs
of a Russian dancer.

you smell and shine
like caramel my
moe you melt over us.

rocking with children
that ran to you down
stairs and landings and stairs
in your Oakford house
on the corner with
the round tulip garden.

you wanted to fight in
American wars, but
they sent you away with
your new born son and
your wife

who lagged the six miles home
letting tight tears
ruin her good wool suit
and the baby bobbed his fine bone head
in search of a nipple.

you sewed American crotches
on your black treadle Singer
and made the musky hides
of animals into fur collars and trim
for ladies in white kid gloves.

you prayed every Saturday
while we stared apple-faced
over the smooth brown banister
and you rocked.

Karen Hesse

THE CALL

Late,
when the cat curves a halo downstairs
in the corduroy rocker,
a two tone whistle
strays up the hill
through the front yard
one low one high.

The call thrills slugs
in the deep summer grass,
it laces a thin web of echoes
through the oak bark, and
hangs like dew
from the willow.

Crickets gather earthen bowls of night
between their legs
until it comes again
one low one high.

Shadows spill over the front porch,
the cat drops to the hard floor,
steps hold their breath.

Karen Hesse

Were I to be useless
I could
stay up late
wakeful
watching the sky
the shadow, nothing clouds
for lights and shapes and signs.

I could pace off each square
of my rooms until
the tracks were old
and then
go visit
dark houses
with the front doors
unlocked.

I would be welcome
better
than the late night phone calls
to puzzled friends
rubbing sleep from their mouths
better
than the crowded parks.

I could go down dark alleys
lurk
under the streetlights
with their slick, grey trees
the strange pods
that are dead snakes, hanging.

Banging pots in hell
I have seen the city,
beat it stormed
and shuttered
in the dark nights
under the lights
and when the sun came
and the canyons melted
and the magic went
like vapors and bats
rustling the sky
I would deny the echoes
reel through the streets
the dead fish of my body
and go home
and draw the shades
and hide.

Jim Beall

starlings

1

starlings

when they are about to die
ascend the white sky
slashing with their wings
thru the wounds they make
they enter

2

night bruises over

3

soon

the stars struggle thru
fluttering new born wings
they gauze the sky in light
and in their greying
descend

Patrick McGrath

IN THE AUTUMN THE YOUNG YOUNG MAN

In the autumn the young young man
Under leaves
Knees up against chest
In a garbage can
Gazing at spiders
Hears from above the leaves
a brother whispering
"Here comes Dad"
and smiles with an image of
springing
arms up
and for one second
looking like a tree
as the leaves float down and
Shoe
heavy Shoe-
Stamping Down
the leaves and image filled head.
a scream
and a scream.

Kenneth M. Goodman



“Blue” Walker -- Lightweight





At Camp Airy

Sky
like King Arthur's.
Warm magic: Merlin.

But this is Airy.
A path leads away
from the younger bunks,

leads to a sword
locked in stone, waiting
for a man in a boy

to free himself
from stone.
Lancelot moves among

five firs,
newly grown.
If I follow

into the flat grass
past the five firs
I know I will never

come back. The firs
will first be swords,
then towers to hold me

captive, then fire
reaching up for me.
Each night

on this cot that jangles
like armor,
I pull on myself

in the darkness,
afraid to close my eyes
and go into that sky.

Edward Gold

I:i

[The scene opens on 4 old men sitting in front of a covered wagon. It is just after sunset. There is a coffee pot on the fire, and a coyote howls mournfully in the background. All four men are around the fire staring off into space. The wind rustles the canvas of the wagon as one man begins to speak...]

CHUCK: [In a tone heavy with monotony] What time do you reckon the stage be a-comin' through, Jake?

MELVIN: Chuck, don't bother Jake. He's thinkin' about home. [coyote howls again]

BURT: What's the matter with you, Melvin? It ain't polite to interrupt Chuck when he's tryin' to ask Jake a question.

JAKE: [starts to softly snore]

CHUCK: Well, Burt, I don't rightly see how it's any of your did-burned business.

BURT: It t'ain't polite I tell you.

MELVIN: Burt, it's not being social to disagree with Chuck.

CHUCK: Look who's talkin' about not being social.

JAKE: [snore more and more loudly]

BURT: I'd take that as a personal insult. [Grand-father clock chimes 3 times]

CHUCK: Dang that clock! It always did like you best. It only chimes when yer around it.

JAKE: [snore so loudly none of the following can be heard.]

MELVIN: My mother was a Rambler. She moved when she didn't want to, and the ashes all blew away.

CHUCK and BURT: [shocked] And the ASHES all blew away

MELVIN: And Jake don't care neither. He's just like a Father what ain't!

CHUCK: What ain't what?

JAKE: [suddenly stops snoring; conversation abruptly stops coyote is heard again]

I:ii

[A canoe with 4 giggling teenage girls drifts down the Hudson River. They are dressed in contemporary clothes, and one of them is dragging a fish net.]

CINDY: [giggle] NO fish yet?

CANDY: [tee hee] I didn't *feel* anything!! [other girls giggle]

[An arrow is seen to pierce the side of the canoe, and it slowly sinks. An armchair comes up in its place, slides across the water and onto the shore. An old man, MARTY, hobbles up to it and sits in it. He looks very weary and weather-beaten. He pulls a piece of fish-net from the bottom of the chair.]

MARTY: Looks like a piece of fish-net.

TOM: [jumping out of a near-by bush] CAUGHT YOU!!

MARTY: I just can't seem to stay hidden. You... You always find me! [He gets up from the armchair and crosses over to Tom, who

slowly starts to back away. They both stop and freeze in position. A cat is heard pawing through a trash can, and a police car goes by. The sun sets. A boat whistle blows mournfully.]

TOM: I'm sorry.

MARTY: [gets out a book, and, still standing, reads out loud] See Piggy run. Run, Piggy, run. Run here, run there, over the hill. Run, run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the Ginger Bread man.

TOM: Stop! [RRRING; answers the phone] WHAT?... Who?...You don't say?...You don't say?...Hmm...You don't say! Good bye! [puts phone back in bush]

MARTY: Who was it?

TOM: He didn't say.

[A mugger comes in and steals the armchair, then runs off]

I:iiii

[The inside of a cabin made of logs. A roaring fire blazes, as MAW, PAW, LITTLE DEB, and LUKE sit by it. Maw is sewing, Paw is cleaning his gun, LITTLE DEB and LUKE are playing with a live rattle-snake. Vicious wind and snow are heard outside. PAW gets up, opens the door and is blasted by tons of snow. He struggles to close the door against the wind, then sits down.]

PAW: Sure is snowin' outside.

MAW: [Gets up, opens the door, and snow pours in. She struggles to get the door shut.] Not as hard as last year. [LITTLE DEB and LUKE get up, open the door, peer outside, snow pours in. They struggle to close the door.]

LITTLE DEB: I think it's worse than last year.

LUKE: T'ain't neither.

LITTLE DEB: It is so!

LUKE: T'ain't neither.

LITTLE DEB: It is SO!

LUKE: T'ain't neither. [He smacks LITTLE DEB in the mouth].

LITTLE DEB: It is SO!!

LUKE: T'ain't neither. [He punches her hard in the stomach. She gets up, opens the door, and snow pours in. She takes out a tape measure, and measures the snow near the door. She comes back in, and struggles to get the door closed. By this time there is 12" of snow in the cabin. She sits back down near LUKE, who is still playing with the snake.]

LITTLE DEB: It is so.

LUKE: T'ain't neither.

MAW: You two shut up and play with that snake! [They do so.]

[They sit peacefully for several minutes. The door suddenly opens,

and snow pours in, filling the cabin two-thirds of the way full. They have made no attempt to move; all keep doing their respective things. The snow stops.]

PAW: Must be spring.

MAW: I reckon.

LITTLE DEB and LUKE: Can we build a snowman?

MAW: I reckon. [LITTLE DEB and LUKE continue playing with the snake. The oil lamp burns out.]

PAW: The oil lamp done burnt out. [It is pitch black.]

MAW: You're right, Paw.

PAW: What about my right paw? And why can't you call it a hand like everyone else?...While we're on the subject, I'd just like to thank you for giving me the best years of your life.

MAW: I wasn't doin' nothing anyway. [The oil lamp comes back on].

PAW: The oil lamp came back on.

MAW: You're right, Paw.

PAW: What about my right paw? And why can't you call it a hand like everyone else?

MAW: [Calling] IIIIT AAAAAA HAAAAANNNDDDDD!!! ... IIIITT AAAAAA HAAAAANNNDDDDD!!!

II:i

[A high level Pentagon office. Five generals are seated at a map table. The air is heavy with smoke, though no one is smoking.]

GEN GORGE: These troops'll come over the ridge, while B forces hold this batallion in deadlock.

GEN HERSHEY: The entire Red army'll be caught in the old meat grinder.

GEN FISHING: And C company will, so to speak, turn the crank!

GEN BARRE: And the 4th Wing will, so to speak, surrey the orkenshine!

GEN FISHING: But only so to speak!

GEN BARRE: Quite, quite! The grandmother...

GEN MILLS: [enters suddenly] What about my grandmother? What's done hangs heavy on the dew drops of temptation. As the oft-read book becomes worn, the mind's channels droop into the cavern of fatigue. Would that wood would wear like wood, that glue would wear like glove.

ALL: Wooooo-----WOW! [GEN MILLS exits. Enter GEN MOTORS.]

GEN HERSHEY: Bring the mountain to Mohammed!

GEN MOTORS: Zeig hein norg bline goofen!

GEN GORGE: And the A Wing will, so to speak, fluster the gordswagger!!

GEN MOTORS: Pour la fiante de la temps-fete-murable! Au bord du chocolate!

GEN GORGE: Quite! The key to the Situation!

GEN MOTORS: Vers hurney gurney gurny valpalurny. [Exits]

GEN FISHING: Send it by secret courier. Then it won't be secret.

GEN BARRE: Quite quite! [All exit mumbling, "Quite, Quite."]

II:vi

[An old shack in the hills. A still is running outside, pigs and chickens and hogs clutter the set. RALPHIE is outside rocking and whittling. UNCLE SMILYCUBE is cleaning an old pig. RALPHIE'S son, MOON, is playing the guitar and singing.]

MOON: "Now iffen you can't bring me back,
And iffen you cain't go
And why he sade 'I thee do lack'
To fly, or not to crow."

RALPHIE: Right good, son, right good.

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: I thought his name was Moon.

* * *

RALPHIE: My son's name *is* Moon.

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: What's your daughter's name?

RALPHIE: My son's name is Moon, and my daughter's name is Son. My Maw's name was Pop and my Paw's name was Uncle. My brother-in-law's name is Fred because his father's name was. Moon was named before Son, because my son is Moon. My aunt's grandfather's nephew, my fourth cousin twice removed, I called Aunt, even though he wasn't.

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: But--

RALPHIE: My sister's best friend and mother-in-law are both named Carlene, but Bobby Watson wouldn't have been any better. I was not talking about basic betterness, but only inherent bitterness.

MOON: "A rose by any other name
Would still smell like a hawg"

RALPHIE: What do you think about it, Unk?

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: It may take a little longer, but you'll get a lot more out of it.

RALPHIE: In your opinion, what you've learned to this point is wrong. You are not twenty-five, and therefore cannot think like a twenty-five-year-old. All people are different. Baby's playing with matches are inherently dangerous. Glasses are a good spectacle?

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: What?

RALPHIE: Wheels will continue to roll until they are flat, then they will slide, unless they flip.

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: For many are cold, but few are frozen.

RALPHIE: OH, your value system must be different than mine.

* * *

UNCLE SMILYCUBE: What were you saying? [A vicious pack of dogs is heard in the background]. Hey--! That sounds like a vicious pack of dogs in the background!

RALPHIE: Vicious dogs don't exist unless you can hear them.

MOON: "Oh, if you hear a vicious dog,
Run the other way.
And if you see a big ol' frog,
Grab your gun and--"

RALPHIE: RIGHT GOOD, MOON, BUT I SAID SHUT UP!!!
[He picks up the jug and throws it at MOON, who kicks the corner of the porch roof. It collapses on them all.]

III:iii

[A cave opening in a mountain side. Forest noises. Enter Chuck, Melvin & Burt carrying a snoring Jake on a Stretcher. Coyote howls.]

CHUCK: It's about time for the stage.

MELVIN: Yep, shorly is. Supposed to be in that cave.

BURT: Well, well, let's go, Well, well...[They enter cave. Enter giggling girls with canoe and broken arrow.]

CINDY: Tee hee, I never did catch anything.

CANDY: If your father finds out, you'll catch it! [An arrow pierces the canoe. A crow lands on it. They giggle and enter cave.]

MUGGER: [enters with MARTY] Turn me in 'n' I'll never speak t'ya agin.

MARTY: Armchair theft is one of the lowest forms of crime!
[they exit]

ROD SERLING: [entering] Ignimias of ignorance have plagued the ignorant as well as unignorant. To be ignorant, by law, is to be the very soul of ignorance. Honesty in ignorance is not the same as honesty *from* ignorance. Stoncroll unmosses. ONE TWO!

[The ground shakes, a boulder drops down, blocking cave entrance. Rod stops, looks at boulder, and cries. He cries the anguish, frustration, and suffering of 3 billion human beings, or the impoverished multitudes. He cries. The entire cave collapses and he keels over. A loud, rumbling snore rises from the rubble. It gets louder. A mighty voice, the whole cast, sounds over the snoring:] WHAT ABOUT MY GRANDMOTHER!??? [whiteout]

John Boos



THE GENERAL TRUTH

If you ask me
"shall I go on,
shall I go on now"
as you have asked me
at 5AM slurring
(a voice fading on the telephone),
three months pregnant and bleeding
as you have been each night these 6 months,
if you give yourself a new name
and tell me you've been swallowing
white pills
"is that all right?",
I will tell you it doesn't matter

And if you call me
on an August Sunday in the afternoon
because I am a white bitch
and you touch yourself
moaning
with I Love Lucy on your t.v. set,
I will tell you--
because there is no one here to stop me--
I love you,
that you are very good.

MRS. FENIMORE

In kindergarten, Mrs. Fenimore's wrinkles snapped as she yanked my elbow out of line. She made Hope come to school in the afternoon and me in the morning, because we were friends. In the morning when the school bus came, I would cry, but my mother made me get on the bus. Later she told me that she would cry at the kitchen table after I'd gone. She knew I couldn't reach the spot Mrs. Fenimore had assigned for my lunchbox, on the top shelf. She knew I was afraid I wouldn't be able to pull my leggings over my orthopedic shoes. Mrs. Fenimore's wrinkles crackled when she told us we should do things for ourselves.

One day I lost my tiny plastic baby I kept in a pill bottle filled with water. Sometimes she would look big, sometimes small. My mother wouldn't ask Mrs. Fenimore for me if she'd found her. I would search the counters at the 5 & 10 for one just like her. But I didn't ask Mrs. Fenimore, even when I was in the first grade. My first grade teacher told my mother that she could tell I'd had Mrs. Fenimore for kindergarten - whenever she asked me a question, I snapped from my chair to attention. Mrs. Fenimore marked me "N" - needs improvement - in willingness to sing in front of others.

Now
Mrs. Fenimore
I wear a white gown
And sing solo in Schumann's "Benedictus."
The sweet notes would charm your wrinkles smooth.
As easily as my notes slide from each other,
Your hands would slide open
The drawer where my baby has been
Floating.
You would take my baby home,
And play with her.
And at night you would rock her
In your arms. All these years
She's had still water.

Grace Finkle

I.

it used to be
you would take me shopping.
while loading up on strawberry yogurt
and choosing steaks,
we'd toss flirts between us
like juggled oranges.
in my room
as I put the food away
I'd feel your eyes on me.
the teasing of the past hours would
explode on my narrow bed.
we fit together so well that
I'd fall asleep.

it used to be
you would ask softly
"Do you need to go shopping?"

II.

We bring in the packages.
As I toss food in the refrigerator
You lie still
Your eyes closed.
I step over empty grocery bags to reach you.
Your eyes flicker open at last
You ask me to do everything tonight.
I wouldn't mind
But I know that you're on the way to your new woman.
Now I massage you
I undress you slowly
I make you sigh.
Afterwards you ask "What time is it? Do you mind
If I leave soon? I have to study and
Laurie might get suspicious."
As you rest
I lie stiff by your side.
I can not find a place meant for me.

III.

As I scrape my refrigerator of mold,
Blood crusting over raw meat,
And the insides you sucked out
Of all my eggs,
The phone rings.
It is a new friend
He says "I've run out of cream cheese.
Do you want to go to the Grand Union?"
Like you, he is good at picking tangerines.
In my room
He helps me put the food away.
Part of me thinks he is you,
The other part takes him
Downstairs and says goodnight.

THE INVESTIGATION

(At the plantation down
by the lake the table's
been placed. upright. un-
der a weeping cherry. We
are closer to the scene
of the crime than anyone
really knows.)

1.

Where in what place
were the trees flowering
in the front lawn.

2.

What were you thinking
there exploding into mainstream
not where eyes dart from each other
like fish.

3.

How were you like a speared fish
fresh out of water
flashing off light
incandescent noon on the lake.

4.

When else have you seen this tree
so flagrantly alive. on the street on
the lake

—it was noon.

5.

Why don't you tell us these things
we're here to help
eliminate amputate landscapes
relieve pressure.

6.

Who wouldn't you
rather be. the fragrance
the key
the sound of doorlocks
clicking. incandescent noon.
watching time on the lake
rippling and erasing
starting over again.

Bill Griffiths

AIRPORT

You're ready to board when we suddenly discover a piece of the puzzle is missing.

Just when I think I'm the thief
two men from Tokyo bust past me to confess.

You stand there watching it all with such assured eyes. I'm dying to at least try the zipper on your suitcase. Who knows? There are extraordinary cases...

Either you or the DC-9 is revving to go. I'm caught up too. Rrrrrmmmmm.

This movie is old and I finally see
the white between the frames
not the recurring plot
starring Pathos-- and a cast of thousands.

--Masters of the quick ending
we make our getaways.

Bill Griffiths

In the Dept. of Commerce building
carpenters and dry wall men buzz
in and out.
Security guards kill time slowly.
Jefferson,
and the rest of Maintenance
went down to move a typewriter
3 days ago and
haven't come back.
Mac sits by the phone and covers
reading a book.

They are remodeling the Ballroom
on the 1st floor
droppping the high ceilings
to 8 feet.

Soon,
no one will know of the black void
in Commerce.
That negative space
howling
at the boxed insects
surrounding it.

Except wait!
In a back room
laid out on a pile of carpets
Jefferson, transcending booze &
boredom, remembers the void
and then there is the guard...
and the elevator man...

Bill Griffiths

In a small boat

That we would go sailing
with a cancerous man
is a fact.

That the huge nylon lung
would swell full and
sure someday,
is not questioned.

And when the wind would
choke over the hold, and
the cancerous man would
rasp "don't let 'er Luff
boys, keep 'er in the wind"
It is well known that we
would try.

But we were boys in a small
boat
with a cancerous man
at the tiller .

David Hickman

PIER AT MIDNIGHT

Here, suspended in
a darkness
edged with breakers,
I feel salt and sand
in black wind
and

Remembering fish,
I understand

He didn't walk on
the water, but on
the things
underneath.

Around me, billions
swim
and each leaves a
trail of mouthed
O's
that grow, rise,
and halve this
dark blanket of
sky.

David Hickman

HOW THE DAY BEGINS

Now it's dawn I'm wildcats prowling.
The screech of brakes
in the middle of this forest.
Birds squeeze out one dull song.
I'm out of control because
at six I was taught to circle
loud jungles in steel trains.
Mother wasn't looking:
Billy threw sand in my eyes where
the grains stuck like pins.
"Dutch rubs," my father called them:
His beard against my soft skin,
and there were pins in my heart.
We made pictures in Sunday School.
I painted black stripes
on orange baby tigers.
One day I drew Jesus with no clothes.
"Never go inside like that," teacher said.
She always wore nice hats,
sent me home such small pains.
They rake my window like this rude red sun.

Seth Thomas Layesman

WITCH'S BREW

My friend's smile cooks my core:
I am an apple baking.
Striding out of the bathroom with
robe draped over left shoulder,
mascara-smeared,
she comes to me.

Ripe, I've been pulled from coffin branches.
and sizzled brown.

A ghost waits for such a gesture.

Jean Fitzgibbon

mama

she worked nights
at the Peacock Alley
days she pushed
hands through hair
in a beauty shop
a good operator

professional ways
customers liked
tipped well
as they left
the last head done
shampoo and set

a quick bite
at Murphy's counter
on the way
to her night job
in the taxi mirror
she became glamorous

a mae west mama
making the rounds
with her tray
cigars cigarettes
a gardenia for the lady
mister won't you

Saundra Maley

THE DAY I BECAME A MAN

Milk came from Jessie,
the Guernsey Mr. Pleasants owned.
Daily in a blue pail white speckled
I carried it thru the wheat field
between his barn and our kitchen.
From 10 to 12, 2 years
white foam
splashing my boots in winter,
toes in summer.
The day I carried it
all the way
without switching hands.

Noise fell in thru windows
rain thru holes.
Rats chewed on Momma's shoe
and Jimie's ear.
Elbows, knees and knuckles
skinned on concrete
From 10 to 12, 2 years
I fed my sisters lunch,
jam and bread in winter,
bread and jam in summer.
The day I brought home
ten dollars worth of food,
spending only two.

Steve Govern

Changing the Roses (The Keki Section)
from *Raisin Song*

.

The city, dismal, disturbed, spats her out, its smallest darkest flower. I am going, I am going, she hollers down down into the flayed yellow light of the tunnel, acceleration paced to the car before the car after, a pearl on a string she proceeds, am going, gone. Small, it has been said, eyes like orchids, a head, heavy, dazzling with tasseled rusty chrysanthemum hair, bright and beautiful, a lavender butterfly tattooed on the left cheek of her buttocks. Having, as she says, had it, leaves forever. Again. The quest then, finally to be begun, conscious she is of having delayed too long in the play. This city no different than any of a score lived, loved and been loved by.

Keki, here, Keki--sharp, precious around she goes, dazing the child's eye like the streamers of crepe on a Maypole, sparkles on water, a silver ring on a finger. Miss Medwick is a clown, unreal in essence as in aura, all aurora, darkly shining arctic light. Can be touched, a rabbit in the hand, then laughter, and she disappears taking your hand with her. A mime she is turning transparent as glass, a flash of mercury, a mirror, and there you are again, alone, so alone. Mother, mother, how is this?

Her card reads:

Mistress Keki Medwick	
Clown, Mime, Oriental Princess	
East of the Moon	West of the Wind

.

Dear God--

I never told. I never told Mama what I *uce* did. I didn't, I didn't tell she turned into a rainbow and right before my face. I didn't, I didn't and it should have been me.

--Keki

.

Oh, the flowers: the crocus and the daisy, the spikes of lavender which is the lilac among the cordate leaf. Oh, the snow drop, the dogwood, aster, fuchsia and lily. Rose. Oh the sores of yaws. Delphinium, hollyhock, irish lace and cancer. Fern and blue bells, "rickets is not a fatal disease." I lily of the valley, columbine, bridal wreath, leprosy, violets, sweet william, gladioli. Oh the flowers, bleeding hearts and hyacinth.

.

It is and has been for some length of time, Keki's most considered opinion that "urinate" is the most erotic word in the English language.

.

This is him. That was him. There, that instant waits to be: noticed. She does. This is/is not an example. She slaps him. Before she slaps him, certain things have

happened: a heart beat, several million little pulses of electricity, at least two pertinent memories, chemical messages, various tensions and relaxations playing against resist of bone, muscle, tendon, shifts the superstructure to a particular motion: eye notes, transmits the information of his person--the ear, a slight readjustment to sharpened waves after palm reaches face skin. Palm skin shocked, more information--electricity again. He smiles: he has acted, she has only reacted. However: he has waited. This is dance: this has nothing to do with white giraffes, poppies [see them blow all across Asia and the blue smoke rise], dolphins, or deer. If she takes a gun [a .45 perhaps], places the muzzle in her mouth and fires, she will blow off the back of her head. If he takes a gun [a .45 perhaps], laces the muzzle in his mouth and fires, he will blow off the back of his head. The difference between the last two sentences is a matter of losing 2 r's, transferring 2 s's, substituting 2 i's for e's.

.

In/vision, a room. It is semidark, has no smell. The walls would be white if it were not so dim here: in shadow they appear to be some shade of pale gray. There are two windows on the outside wall, narrow: 2 feet 3 & 1 half inches wide, perhaps six feet tall. The curtains, strips of faded gingham [plaid probably, but it is difficult to tell, worn and streaked as they are] which hang a good two feet short of the sill. The windows, each, are open, the lower sash slid up in front of the upper. They would admit a great deal of light into this room except: one, they face east [this is an actual, not metaphysical, fact] and it is now just past noon; two, they open on a large elm not six feet away, dense in its summer foliage. Within this room are various pieces of furniture: a large, that is, heavy, chiffonier of bruised mahogany [circa 1917], cherubs, beribboned and beflowered, straining to emerge from the rosy wood; a stained dresser, wood undetermined, with chipped enamel nob's; 2 marble topped, scarred and mismatched, night tables, 1 of which has had the top drawer nailed shut; 1 porcelain lamp [large, pink, over-blown roses hand painted on its bulging side], bearing a new--still swathed in cellophane--Woolworth \$2.98 Sale!, lampshade; 1 rush-bottom chair, near-kin to VanGogh's; 2 narrow metal beds, formerly the property of the county hospital for the nominal insane. One of the beds is made up--white chenille bedspread smoothed meticulously over clean starched and ironed sheets, a thin army blanket folded at its foot. The other, disturbed, contains two bodies, small feminine bodies, although one is perceptibly larger--taller and softer--than the other. Both are naked. The gray light illuminating these bodies reveals no wounds scratches or bruises, nevertheless, one of these persons is crying and on her flesh there is a great deal of blood--this blood is, however, fantastical rather than phenomenal. The other person is not crying, in fact, the other person is asleep. It is not important or particularly useful to know, in the scene just past, who placed whose hands, tongue, legs where, or how, finally, the various orifices and appendages were arranged. It is more than enough, perhaps substantially too much, to know that one sleeps and one sobs. The floor is made of once rough hewn planking, worn smooth in the center and is covered with scattered

articles of clothing. Near the door, which is closed and locked despite the heat of the room, rests a cowhide satchel, its mouth open, sucking gloom.

Who is innocence, renewed with each turn, is wounded continually and wounding in that very acceptance of injury? Who is inquiry, or malice: who touches sores? Who is aridity and who is fecund? Who waits? And where is power and who strives and with what weapons? Who wants and who will not give over? Who hungers and for what? What is the voice in the bird-tongued night?

Take legends for instance, or gifts. Rose, unicorn, silk-worm, moth. Flowers, of course, understood, growing, again--simple chemical process, ordered, obeying simple physical laws: this shall be red and soft, this green with gloss, this thorn, thorn. It is, this is. Or unicorn, with its little broken hooves, dreaming away on the lap of a princess. The worm in its dark weaving, not what is, but what shall be: white velvet petals stuttering to light [gold light] on that anguished horn; the unicorn, its dream is rose. And the woman wakes, or begins to, from the flood of sleep, swimming close to consciousness, submerged in the green, growing flowing back to sleep--hand asleep in soft fur, soft, to return to dimmed light, to green to light. 'Til at last the light, harsh, graceless overtakes her and she wakes to find: a newspaper blowing against her bare legs, ashes on her lips, blood under her fingernails. The unicorn dreams its own dream, in itself, of its own burning. She is awake, she touches, gently, as gently as fire or hunger, the small body next to her, strokes the soft curling hair spangled with dark, the eyelash, the ear. She sighs--again the leap missed, fallen short, faithless. Given that, the energy lost, oh, not lost: dissipated, jangling, jittery, loose in the room, infesting things: furniture dust motes waves of light. A pestilence of electrons. She rises then, goes to the dresser, spats into the porcelain basin in an effort to clean her mouth of its hard metallic taste; naked she goes to the window, lights a pale blue cigarette, its shade matching almost exactly the fading gray blue smoke curling out the window.

The odd, persistent intensity of this second--although of course and as a purely practical [experiential] matter, this second is a different one each time it is named. As if, as if in actual fact it weren't a different one, a mere point, points, on a line, a definable space--a second, which has, is defined as, a certain duration--as if without losing its quality of limited duration, it were to be stretched, from birth to death, even. Twisted slightly awry, until everything one has done, has thought, has felt, or indeed, will, is crammed into the actual instant that is.

If he is not thinking this now, [and he might be, he comes puzzled to it often] his is in it. That is, the single instant when all possibilities have cycled back to the exact point of conception, which contains, and is contained in, all action. So he continues barefooted and sweating down the gravel road, eyes to the front, carefully on only the bright head of his woman's sister. He does not call out to her, does not even hasten to catch up with her. If he lowered the line of his vision he would be taken with her

sturdy brown back, bare save for the white cotton cord of her halter. If he lowered his gaze further, it would rest on the material of her faded cut-offs stressed and strained by the flesh of her buttocks as she walks. Further, to her sturdy, if not quite plump, childish legs. And involved with all this would be crazed with particular physical manifestations of--well, lust.

Is it that simple? To cover her as ram does ewe, stag doe, stallion mare? Even in this case, no. Not with us. Knowing even as he follows, he is being led. Knowing even as he refuses to look, what he is not seeing, knowing that when they are done it will matter no more than if they had done nothing. No matter the words, no matter the motion, no matter the looks, given, received. Knowing nothing would have changed; nothing could be changed.

Is it that simple? To cover her as a ram does ewe, stag doe, stallion mare? Even in this case, yes.

"There is a certain, hard core that is me--beyond that everything is adaptable, serviceable, negotiable." --Keki, after.

The incantory power of come--
[Burning black candles in corners
not watching. Eye blink, wind flicker
Toad blood, in the wrist
in the breast--we don't believe this

Do not turn your head
Do not] He follows, this was not planned, nor wanted [nor wanted?].

She stops about at the edge of the field--slope gentle rising, covered in restive drying grass. There, she pauses and instant, a space. Then continues deep into the wheaten rustle, trailing there her hands, finger ends catching loosened burrs.

Come.
Come.
Come.
Come.

Again, higher up the rise, burning, bright against the heated August gold of the hill, she pauses. Then loses the sense of his presence. She waits, she waits then turns, almost against her will, to watch, him, walking heavily away. Away, back down to the dust road, to the gray house.

And calls him, without words, want only, the candle flaring in the dark brain, calls: him.

Come
Come
Come

dust of tears from until she wipes the
dust of tears from her cheek with the back of a weed-
scratched hand,
and turns again, and continues up the wild whispering
slope.

come









WOMEN

Her scrawny legs
could break my gut.
A quivering flame
held by shaking hands
lights my cigarette.
We sit and tell tales
of our mothers.
I blow out the match
her dress clings to a thigh
she presses knees tight
speaking of a woman
who kept her skinny
wanting a girl always.

I suck in smoke
remember literature Mother gave me
when my chest began to swell

When my ovaries froze
I wanted Mother to
rub me warm.
Her hands gripped an ice water glass
and she sent me to a man.
I was not afraid
of his clean white hands
or neatly clipped nails.
He said, this happens to many young women
and showed me charts I did not understand.
His distant medication
was to start my cycle again
but his touch eased my ovaries back

I exhale a last puff
smoke diffuses her gaze on a fixed point.
I want to be touched.

Adèle Slaughter

IN THE GARDEN

for Karin

I sit on cold colored tiles.
Under me goldfish glide
through light burning between leaves.

Taut muscles never release
the discus thrower caught
moves in shadows

above goldfish, he dances.
Silver seahorses hold birdbaths
in flex of light.

Fish breathe, bubbles glisten and pop
round eyes shoot down
the feather tail slips into deep hollows.

I am absorbed into red light
refracted at the bottom.
Cold sits in my bones.

You lurk under the eaves,
holding to crevices
where vines rip mortar away,

clinging to shadows.
The glare narrows my pupils down
I reach out my hand.

Adèle Slaughter

EYEWITNESS COMPACT MIRRORS

Curved in the rind of the moon,
she garbles my face
glossy,
as in the concave widths
of a spoon-
that beams at my nuisance
of being reversed.

So ludicrous,
she and i
taking turns.

To sweep up stars,
like six pointed jacks
as we lift sprints
of fixed constellations
easy, as pick-up sticks.

Judith Harris

TO MY FATHER

when i was six
i stood on my father's knees,
and he taught me how to knot
his one silk tie
tight around his neck.
i pulled so hard
it made him gasp.
he wore it with a lime shirt
to the office on second wednesdays,
where he is basement caretaker
to flocks of silver beaked
bug eyed machines.
poking them beneath the wings
he makes them sing
sometimes in portuguese.

father
when i was eighteen
i watched the driveway
swell blue
as you parked
to step out carefully.
one of your legs
goes stiff
and reminds you

that a trolley rides on knives
how they sliced
when you hopped the fare:
the boy dropped to
his knees
as the last car
took a curve,
whipping its tail
like an angry woman.

your straw hat
parts the black wells
that root
and grow wild
under the brim,
where it is shaded
a deeper green
than the tinge
of mint juleps
spread thru these skins.
i can see father
that your eyes
are electric again.

charged by static summers
they burned
and bled redder
with the war,
until the holocaust
when you learned
from the Fathers
that you could hate
Hitler.
the vipers got thinner
and uncoiled
the brands they had made
on your lids.

eyes cooled.
and rolled like
unflavored chips
of ice
to meet mine.
as eighteen birthdays
combust
with yellow fuel,
my eyes bloom
flames
sprung from your fire-seed.

Judith Harris

A BACK RUB

Waiting on your row of tables,
your tension precedes you
as a muffled siren,
howling then the louder to warn.

You stop to take orders only
with your slumped uniform,
your pencil thumbnail sharpened,
staring through the pad, the customer,
the floor.

I come to take you home on fridays,
making my hands the drinkers of static,
making a brace of my arm
as we hug to pass through the door.

Our hellos sound low and quick.
Yours rings glad to be gone,
but in a voice like your eyes,
a little dark with circles.

At the door to your house
you turn the lock electrically,
explode through, your head tipping like a
too big order, as you make for your room.

And I, not thinking what to do,
with you flopped on the bed,
lick with my hands
the buckets of spark from your body.

In a fist full of Lady flesh
I find broken dishes, dropped forks,
the hostess's teeth, a poor tip,
and take out what I can, leaving you.

A back rub is a small thing—
if you think about it.

Now your body sprawls along the sheets.
My hands move, as big as mountains.

Patric Pepper

YOUR NUMBER'S UP

for Scott Joplin,
composer of "Maple Leaf Rag"

Joplin your rag-
time gives my fingers hic-
cups

Your notes breathslap
empty lungs that
convulse by a steady-beat heart

In my hands
the blood count's
even on the keys

but my fingers
hit, then straddle
bounce hit then all fall

off
the beat.

Caryn Wiener

COMPOSING SOME LIGHT JAZZ FOR PIANO

Again my feet tap
impatient to follow sunbeats.
listen:

in the distance, chimes.
The quick flicking of notes
on and off the page
calls them
like a searchlight
to home.

Tomorrow they'll shine between
fingers held close and stiff. I'll play
and scare the twilight
out of these
purple-veined hands:

Caryn Wiener



And there's this cat and He's coming on
kind of heavy about this love-shit and this
peace-shit and He's standing on a corner and
people are listening — like a rush that goes
by so fast you're not sure if its
happened or not —
and this cop is just totally freaked, maybe
even listening, and cars stopped and like
nobody moves and even the mayor comes down to
see this commotion in his city and for some
reason he don't understand and he goes away all
fuming.
and this cat just keeps talking on and
on and the people keep coming and man
it looks like everybody's gonna get
their shit together when all of a sudden
these anesthetized guardian agents come swinging
into the crowd and everyone runs except that
cat--- He just keeps on talking and when they
got Him and it looks like no one else
is around
they wheel out this big wooden cross and I
gotta close my eyes cos'
I've seen this before.

Mark Erlich

On her way home from the realtor's, a knock disturbed her noiseless drive; and it is difficult to pretend you are driving a luxury car when there is a knock in the engine. Mrs. Warren felt, oh how she felt, that she should have been driving a luxury car; she felt as sure about what she should have been driving as a saint feels about her calling. She should have been driving her luxury car noiselessly home from the realtor's had not . . . Rather, she should have been driving her luxury car noiselessly home from anywhere but a realtor's.

Oh my God, she moaned, twenty thousand dollars. And we paid eighteen thousand five hundred--eighteen thousand five hundred dollars for it ten years ago. Oh my God. [If every groan were a brick, she would have had her home].

Mrs. Warren's Mother was a Methodist. Mrs. Warren became an Episcopal. You couldn't call it a conversion, actually; it wasn't at all like that. It was like shopping every Saturday at the A & P and then, all of a sudden, shopping at the Safeway. Mrs. Warren's Mother was a high school graduate: Mrs. Warren went on to college. Mrs. Warren's Mother married a good provider, but she, going to better schools and churches, married a better provider, a man who would not be content to obtain for his mate any semi-detached tract home. Oh no, Mr. Warren was the type who gives his wife the very best in the way of housing, the very best in that way being a home out at Bellegrove Country Club, a land overflowing with other Episcopalians and college graduates.

Is it therefore just, Oh Heavenly Good Provider, is it therefore meet and just that I should drive home in a compact car to a changing neighborhood? This was her unvoiced prayer.

He's got to be joking, she thought, joking or jewing me to offer twenty thousand when the smallest home out at Bellegrove starts at eighty-five! What about the improvements? She had asked him that. In the past year alone, they had put twelve hundred dollars into improvements. [She was too careful to specify what sort of improvements: the chain mail fence, the burglar alarm system.] But he seemed to know exactly what sort of improvements they had made. What's an improved property, his smile seemed to say, what's an improved property in a deteriorating neighborhood?

She wound her way through Bellegrove before heading for home. The sight of the planter mansions, French chateaux, and Tudor manors provided her with the sense that some neighborhoods could not change, that some houses were unassailably secure. She noticed all those little things that even old residents missed--whose shutters needed a contrasting trim, whose bay windows were newly but poorly draped. In humility of heart she almost prayed: Oh Lord, what is in your floorplan for me? Is there just the smallest lot, the smallest landscaped lot with the tiniest home, the smallest landscaped lot with the tiniest customized home? Her heart was as bitter as the lawgiver's when he saw but could not enter the land. What would he have felt, she wondered, if he could have motored through but never moved in Canaan?

They had tried renting, running an advertisement for an entire week that detailed all the extras without mentioning the address. One response was all they got, from newcomers to town who said they would drive right over and take a look. She saw their faces, hesitant, beneath their tinted windshield and had to cajole them from their car. "Evelyn, we can't live here," the husband blurted to the wife. "Why, the windows don't even have bars." She almost choked on that one. But she forced herself to reply in her sweetest pass-the-bridge-mix tone. "We can have them installed for you; what decorator color do you think you'd like? And I suppose you'll want more locks, too. How about the special kind that only works one way, so that you have to call a neighbor when you want to be let out?"

"Open for Inspection Today." She slowed, stopped, and parked in front of the sign. Set far back on a heavily wooded lot stood an Italian villa--balustraded terrace, pastel stucco, rusticated stonework and all. Not my taste, she thought, but does it do any harm to look? She was well enough dressed to carry it off. "New in town?" the realtor would say. "Not really," she would answer. "The neighborhood seems nice enough, but, really, the house is not to our taste. Have you anything Georgian? My husband is from England, you see." No, better not say that; the realtor could very well have something Georgian.

She walked up the path, admiring the oleanders, the peonies, the little grotto, the obligatory putti. So much to admire! She found herself right up on the terrace and then

straight through to the hallway. The sound of her heels echoed off the twelve foot ceiling. From somewhere in the recesses came the sound of another pair of heels echoed off another twelve foot ceiling. So, the realtor is a lady.

"Good afternoon," the realtor formally began. "Oh! Hello, Mrs. Warren." Why hadn't she remembered that a clubwoman was showing properties these days out at Bellegrove? "I was passing through this part of town and couldn't resist the urge to peek," she offered. "Surely, and why not? It never hurts just to look." With that the clubwoman seated herself on a window ledge, the way one will not do in the presence of a prospective customer. Just to look? she thought. You bitch, Marie Royalsen, you bitch. Mrs. Warren did not look long.

She turned toward home, to the place where dwelled in increasing numbers the sons and daughters of Sham. Anyway, it was time to feed the dog, who was probably howling like a wolf by now. [I like a wolf? It was a wolf.] Nothing was as detestable in her sight than that damned watch dog, she thought. But either she lied to herself or her heart could only contain one hatred at a time, for equally hateful to her was her daughter. More so, in fact, just as hatred for a cause, if known, usually outweighs hatred for its effects.

And her daughter was the cause of so much of it--the

high chain fence, the burglar alarm system, the damned watch dog, the living in a deteriorating neighborhood. It was her monster of a daughter and her monstrous medical bills--doctors and nurses, medications and examinations. Her good provider had made a bad provision when he got her with that child. Bellegrove, they decided, would have to wait a while; they would move into a modest home as a temporary investment. Then came the child, then the diagnosis, then another year spent in their temporary investment, then another and another. Now it had been ten years and it may be another decade, since the child celebrated every promotion with another expensive operation. Oh God, what a life for someone who never made room in the blueprints for a nursery, less an infirmary.

As she was driving into the carport, she could hear the snarling of the dog--the snarling of the dog and the shrieking of the child. Jesus, she thought, it's gotten loose and is going for the child. She could not enter immediately; keys to the many locks had to be found, found somewhere down in her purse. By the time she had the keys in all the locks, she only could hear the snarling of the dog. It was a crowded purse, but not that crowded.

C.S. Nagel



BLOWPOINT

1974

She wears her own face
as we do not,
until we cease to wear
the clouds
of all confusion,

of all confusers
who wear the false face
He never wore, Whose
is terrible. Is
perfection

Maximus
olson

death
here
I started very tight.
I went in with an icepick.
I already knew what I was after,

the wind's phallus.

crack the ledges
compass around circles sloped

gravity
shift

here I started tight
bit down on a jackscrew
and went in to get it,

the wind
phallus.

Conversations with Prisoners of War

Here in the streets

with some men and women
going out beyond a gray-dark line, nonbeing, as
motions
are premeditated, then
gone as sifted facts
of being
are predicted
then gone.

blown from head to head into head the she brain
cracks
legends are not honored Then he said
 he said
Pour: see "I can't learn myself"
 "do them and
those things simplest them, and
to learn: Coleridge's junkie they dissolute, practical
 to me: a piece at last: "
 dear friend, he wanted that thing
 he coughed it all out hidden from the rest,
 and then he died unanswered forever, all
 That's what he wanted, all

things alive are merely alive -
 merely working, alabor."
then he said "I can't learn myself,"
and he ran into a crowded street yelling there's
a man with an automatic weapon"
I laugh.

I think I am after him,
I sharpen my pick.

[beyond] the gray-dark line where the air stops
 merely aware,
the trees persist sensing,
or they don't. Beyond [that] you
 don't go.
 you don't be, there.
 no known, there
 or is there, death?

beyond that the air wall begins
 you pass through death,
 you crawl out
 without memory.
 nothing is left
 but to memorize,

to eat the wind's phallus.
fall into the sea. no one gets to see
 the child
 but me
StandStill, her head goes through
shake the wreath the windshield

as it goes out,
the ocean
will grab, with itself,
a few trickles of snow
fallen years before,

the tiny rotted flower
coming out of the ice

I carry this away in my arms.
the wind as it pushes itself
through her mouth and nostrils
makes strange
The great faces deadflesh harmonics
vaporous and ugly
The great aerobic earth
shored and gouged

these
one memorizes at birth.

2 self-effacement and birth

a simple nodding.
a simple nod. again.

Elizabeth took her man,

and he did.
and he reached from his silver grey mouth
to get her,
but she was beyond his grasp.
allmen.

diane
Wakoski doesn't like

man with ring on small finger
man with silver ferrari
man with motorcycle
and at some time, particular,
men, man

too she Wants

to be forgiven.
she spits in any bed
that he will undoubtedly attempt to lie!

a.
so slowly there is burning
fear understanding to result
permute, so slowly bringing harm
to herself.
wanting to be forgiven
now
for what she will do.
sister of rage ragmouth foreswear
broken legends,
under. can she take away
her children?
disregard others'?
Commute each day
Person non gender
into the city
into the rival cities
foreign, unlike?
so slowly the harm
her kiss
until she kisses nothing
herself the first
it is a dark blooming. stranger.
nonbeing.
and "I am not even
absolutely alone
yet.

b.
talking to Lynne
her sex machine was
never fit right, nor
could she/ prisoner
in a whorehouse/ in a
life of 20 year whorehouses
/ not -- lay in a bed,
stretching him to her
Down
to her,
you have to go to prison
to talk to her
get her to mumble
these things:

"there is no fire
between my legs
no fire
in my heart
no fire
in my mouth
no fire
in my head
no fire
in you, none of you
All of you.

these motions of self-effacement and attack are historically
validated, unless it is unthought of,
beauty is always a lie"

Zieu.

fled.

Condemned "I cant learn myself."
to his masculinity,

3.
There is
no
one thing,

that means.
None
that even vibrates.

none.

Stone, cell, strength. Plan.

Conversations with Prisoners of War,

all caged for different reasons, with the same symptoms.
the simplest fact is that I reflect only myself,
only, what I say, what I do. and so the prisoners
can never meet one another, never would, know how to.
the gun and the pick, part of the dress, equally, and
for different reasons among the prisoners we take
what we can get with these what's coming what's
ours already Plan grab what's our strength
do, do anything
into the 3rd cage of blackness
another tense,
into the 3rd host of man-eater
another person,
into the 3rd repulsion
another kind,
into the 3rd example of fraud
another voice,
into the 3rd stage of compromise
another inflection,
into the 3rd vision with weapon
another mood
another number another number,
another number. another number another
number. another number number, another
number and another number

more forms
more generalizations
more infections
more functions
more analysis more clinic
she has finally come with us

she was tired
and could not speak.
the sun had gone into her mouth.
dust had multiplied.

Mark Mastro

BY THE OCEAN

Down on the beach
at night
there are people buried
to their necks in sand.
They drink beer which foams out
onto the beach,
leaving nothing
but a dark spot.

Two girls run to the ocean,
throw their bodies
into the waves that wash out their hair,
their lips, and their mouths.

Overhead, a string of fluorescent birds flies
against the sky
like so many Christmas lights
all strung out.

Nanci Neff

AFTER THE PROM

Granddaddy died a month ago
just in time for the senior prom.
He left mom the house, all the
stoves and vegetable scrapers and
bits of knuckle. He used to spit
after telling me how those New Hampshire
snow drifts would blow just below the
pane and stop.
Now it is June and our rented clothes
sweat onto his bed. The wood frame
snowshoes hang on nails above the window,
wanting to crush ice. They watch me.
wait for movement.
You watch, too. Carefully. I reach for
his shoes, press the catgut to my nose.
wait for thaw.

Elijah Mirochnik

57

fierce concupiscence and unsatisfied desires

o bless the english word it has a tongue for each
a tongue to lie and slander..and one to lick a peach
o fuzzy balls hanging
on the tree bite hard
and down
a fuzzy ball licked on the tree
in the middle of the town

ah to see the sun rising a setting
over the hill
and the look on her face when i pay for me glace
with a hundred dollar bill..
tis your heart thats turned to ice
you bloody bloke and punk
tis mesself you will be robbing
tch tch i smell a skunk

get away from the trunk
its got a lock for which i've the only key
and though you try so hard to get into me lard
i've a blunderbus lying side me....

o pity you hag with your life in a drag
and me words that will peel for your ear
i'm eating me glace
for one hundred six days
i promised i'd do it a year...

Joe Brennan

ode to a live wire

for judith

o whats all this about being a

poet who in the middle of a divine

thought is stretched to pick the beat

and measure in each line and hope to hear

from some part of us we cant know for the

moment..

there...where the sun has shown many times on

broken stones and has gloomily predicted death

in the most morbid way.....?

grow old, roll

up your pants you tired fart get off the beach

alas..alas...this mass comforts us so....

the bottle with the ethereal nipple

sucked dry in large elegant gulps...

how does

one respond to the live wire????...that twisting

turning snake...does one just say..

look hear!!!!

and be done with it???? one surge fixes that....

one short life....be mortal....lie while you struggle

...blissful, tell your soul....leave the torment

for the less experienced who want to enjoy their

suffering awhile longer...

but that love is so great

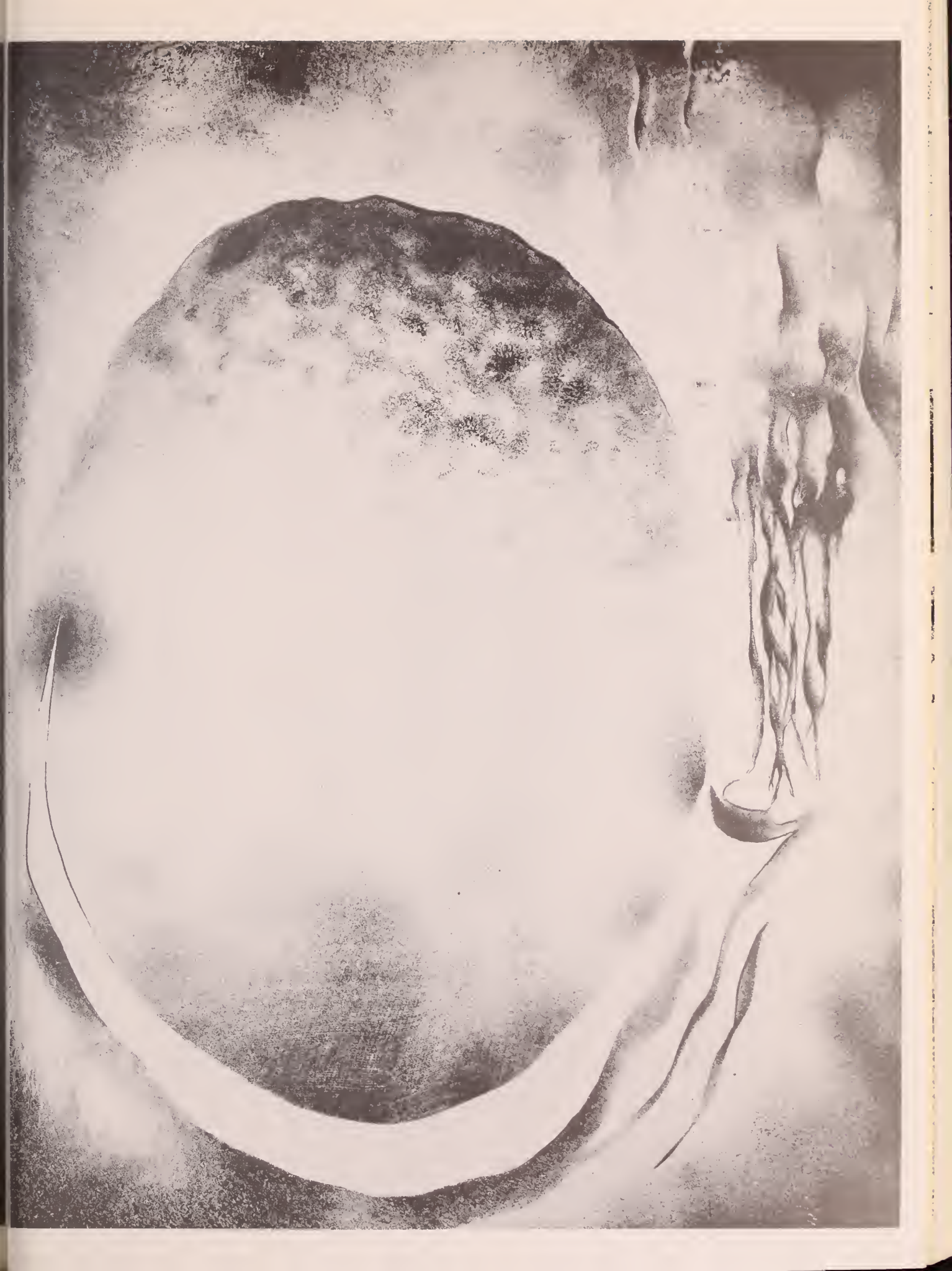
as to reach up mountains for peaks in the name of

fame...that time of glowing...the claps resounding...

the hands waving.....do it forever....love the race..

someone must do it for the record.....

Joe Brennan



AWARDS

Poetry: David Hickman

Fiction: Ronald DeCicco

Art: Mike Welsh

Each of these first prize winners received a twenty-dollar gift certificate, which was donated by the UMporium.







